

WSDCCRES – 983 – 210925 – PASSED – ECON – SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

FUNDING FOR SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

WHEREAS the Washington State Legislature will take up the issue of transportation funding in the midst of a climate crisis, with transportation creating 45%¹ (and increasing²) of Washington State’s greenhouse gases;

WHEREAS Washington State has built up a massive backlog of preservation maintenance on existing roadways, of which 57% (\$6.9 billion³) is unfunded making Washington the eighth-worst in the country for its share of roads in poor condition (27%), while at the same time more than three- fourths of the State’s spending on roads in 2019 went toward expansion⁴–the fourth highest in the nation–despite WSDOT projections that expansion doesn’t improve overall mobility⁵;

WHEREAS Washington State has a history of racial/ethnic and income inequality in transportation infrastructure, including building highways through neighborhoods with higher percentages of communities of color or lower incomes⁶;

WHEREAS The 18th Amendment to Washington State’s constitution creates a structural inequity by limiting gas tax revenues to roads, including road maintenance, highways, ferries, and salmon recovery;

WHEREAS the Legislature has created new funding sources with carbon pricing that provides the opportunity to invest in proven methods to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gasses;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Washington State Democrats Central Committee (WSDCC) calls for the gas tax to be used in a more fiscally and environmentally sustainable manner by fully funding preservation and maintenance of our existing highway, road, and ferry systems, including modifications for salmon habitat recovery, rather than the unsustainable expansion of roads and highways, especially those through predominantly black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) and/or lower income neighborhoods;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the WSDCC calls for the new carbon pricing revenue to be used exclusively for transformational investments that cannot be funded by the gas tax, including environmentally sustainable mobility and safety such as expanding public transit, passenger and freight rail, ADA compliance infrastructure, walkable Complete Streets, and other non-vehicular mobility;

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that this resolution shall be forwarded to the Chairs and Ranking Minority Members of the Washington House and Senate Transportation and Environment Committees, all Washington State Democrat legislators, and Governor Jay Inslee.

References:

1. <https://ecology.wa.gov/Air-Climate/Climate-change/Greenhouse-gases/2018-Data>
2. <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/environment/washington-state-greenhouse-gas-emissions-rose-in-2018-due-to-transportation/>
3. <https://wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2020/07/30/2020-Highway-Construction-Project-Delivery-Plan-Assumptions-and-Concepts.pdf>
4. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/transportation/2021/05/23/highway-funding-infrastructure/>
5. <https://wsdotblog.blogspot.com/2018/10/how-traffic-patterns-will-change-after.html>
6. <https://www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/HealthDataVisualization/DemographicDashboards/CensusTractsDashboard>

PASSED AT THE SEPTEMBER 25 MEETING OF THE WSDCC